

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 08MANAGUA956, NICARAGUA: CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE MARCH AGAIN

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags [#cablegate](#) and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. [#08MANAGUA956](#).

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08MANAGUA956</a>	<a href="#">2008-07-25 19:38</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Managua</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>  
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>  
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>  
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>  
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>  
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 1950  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 0100  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE 0075  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 1300  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JUL 0213  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE 5393  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE 0476  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE 0223  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//J2/J3/J5// IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHBVNKP/USS KEARSARGE IMMEDIATE  
RULYEGA/COMPHIBRON EIGHT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 000956

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN GREENE  
DEPT FOR INR/IAA EMERSON  
DEPT FOR USOAS  
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO AID/LAC  
NSC FOR ALVARADO  
KEARSARGE FOR COMMODORE PONDS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/22/2018  
TAGS: [NU](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#)  
SUBJECT: NICARAGUA: CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE MARCH AGAIN

REF: MANAGUA349

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli, Resaons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: After a successful march on June 27, Nicaraguan civil society organizations rallied twice more to speak out for democracy and against the Ortega administration. On July 13, the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) and civil society organizations marched in the neighborhood of Monimbo in Masaya ) the place where the seeds of anti-Somoza resistance were planted in the late 1970s. In Managua, an estimated 10,000 people marched across town to the National Assembly building on July 16 in an effort to maintain the pro-democracy momentum that they gained from their June 27 rally. Though the turn-out was smaller than the previous march, spirits appeared high as participants chanted slogans against dictatorship and Ortega.

The march demonstrated that diverse civil society groups, many of which have historically refused to work together, are coalescing and coordinating their efforts ) a rare positive sign for democracy in Nicaragua. Beyond marches, however, it remains unclear how civil society groups will seek to press their agenda with the Ortega government, in an ever narrowing democratic space.

"Ortega y Somoza son la misma cosa"

¶2. (U) The town of Masaya became the center of the opposition movement on July 13 as civil society actors organized a civic assembly to march against the Ortega administration. Dora Maria Tellez, the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) leader who had previously engaged in a 13-day hunger strike to protest the loss of her party's legal registration, said that they were doing the first civic assembly in the Monimbo barrio in Masaya to "refresh Daniel Ortega's memory." According to Tellez, this is the place where the seeds of popular resentment were planted to topple the Somoza government in February 1978. Tellez said that "as they destroyed the Somoza dictatorship, they will also destroy the

dictatorship of Daniel Ortega and Arnolando Aleman." This sentiment was reflected by others in attendance and many called for the Nicaraguan people to fight for their rights.

13. (U) Though touted to be all inclusive, the civic assembly in Monimbo was organized by, and the majority of the participants were party activists from, the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) political party, which lost its

legal registration on June 11, and has been one of the primary mobilizers for the recent marches. This civic assembly was slightly different from the other recent marches in that it seemed to represent a more explicit attempt by MRS to recall the "revolutionary spirit" of the 1970s.

#### March to the (Empty) National Assembly

14. (U) A variety of civil society organizations, led by the Coordinadora Civil (a grouping of over 600 NGOs and associations), and including Movimiento por Nicaragua (focuses on citizen participation and rights), JUDENIC (promotes democratic principles in youth), Movimiento Autonomo de Mujeres (promotes gender equality and women's rights), and Comision Permanente de Derechos Humanos (promotes and defends human rights) amongst others (reftel), coordinated the July 16 march in Managua in an effort to both make their voices and opinions heard and to demonstrate that the Nicaraguan people do not support the way the country is being run. With an estimated 10,000 in attendance, this march was smaller than the one on June 27 and fell short of organizers' expectations, but people still came from all over the country ) even as far away as Jalapa on the Honduran border ) to assert their rights to democracy and freedom.

15. (U) As the people gathered, various leaders spoke out against high food prices, hunger, and the Ortega administration in general; all with the common theme of "Dictadura no, Democracia si" (Dictatorship No, Democracy Yes) throughout their speeches. During the speeches given in front of the National Assembly building, Tellez declared that the people attended the march to remind the government that they have to respond to the problems of the country and that all Nicaraguans "have the right to eat." However, almost as soon as the crowds arrived at the National Assembly (which was out of session) they started to leave, demonstrating a possible a greater level of interest in the march rather than in what civil society leaders had to say.

16. (U) Civil society leaders and observers commented to us on the overall positive atmosphere of the march and emphasized that the people marched from across the political spectrum in support of unity and democracy. Unlike the previous marches, only a few politicians were present, most notably the Vamos con Eduardo (VCE-PLC) mayoral and vice mayoral candidates Eduardo Montealegre and Enrique Quinonez, and there were few party banners flying amongst the thousands of blue and white national flags. Along the march route a few groupings of Sandinista National Liberation Front party (FSLN) sympathizers tried to provoke the crowd along the way, but these were very minor perturbations to the large opposition crowd.

So, what now?

17. (C) Because of the diversity of opposition organizations involved in planning the march, a variety of slogans were used, each of which were chanted in due course. However, the lack of a single, clear message may have diluted the turnout and the overall impact of the march. Civil society organizations are searching for any possible avenue to rally public support to stop the closing of democratic space by the Ortega administration, but the array of slogans seemed to indicate that the only idea they have been able to reach consensus on thus far is to hold marches.

18. (C) During the marches and in subsequent media interviews,

civil society leaders have proposed a 'national dialogue,' though what that term means is unclear. Each civil society organization seems to have its own agenda for such a dialogue. For example, the NGO Movimiento por Nicaragua stresses transparency, inclusivity, abstention from attacks on candidates, and that the MRS and the Conservative Party (PC) be given back their legal status. Other NGOs, such as Coordinadora Civil, believe the national dialogue should be focused on addressing the growing social problems facing Nicaragua. Though civil society is increasingly working together, their differing views of a national dialogue and lack of clarity on the outcome, may impede further tangible progress.

19. (C) Comment: Despite the lower turnout, the July 16 march in Managua brought together a diverse array of civil society groups, many of which have historically refused to work together, and built successfully upon the themes of the earlier marches in support of democracy, improved social services, and political freedoms. This breadth of cooperation has not been seen in many years and is a positive indication of Nicaraguan civil society's potential. However, the civic assembly in Monimbo and its "revolutionary" slant demonstrates that the various opposition actors hold differing views. Not only do the differing views make it difficult for them to coalesce into a single opposition force, but their lack of even a unified slogan does not help the cause. Though their marches have been fairly successful and gained the attention of both the average citizen and the Ortega administration, civil society seems unsure of the next steps. These groups are planning another march for mid-August, possibly to coincide with the National Assembly returning to session. However, civil society will need more than marches if they are to build on the momentum they have gained and mobilize a broader segment of the population.

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